

# **Francis Howell School District**

**Strategic Plan 2007-2011**

**Comprehensive School Improvement Plan**

## Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....	1
Planning Participants.....	6
Analysis of Internal and External Factors.....	10
Mission, Vision, Values, and Goals.....	26
Strategic Goals and Objectives .....	27
Tactical Action Plans.....	28
District Support in Development and Implementation of School Improvement Plans.....	36
Addenda* .....	39
▪ APR and Student Achievement Report	
▪ Academic Analysis of Internal and External Factors	
▪ Assessment Plan	
▪ Career Education Program Evaluation	
▪ Curriculum Development Plans	
▪ Facilities Master Plan	
▪ Financial Plan	
▪ Library Media Centers Assessment and Plan	
▪ MSIP 2002 Concerns Current Reality Report	
▪ Safety and Security Plan	
▪ Special Education Program Evaluation	
▪ State and Federal Program Evaluation	
▪ Technology Plan	

\*Addenda material approved by the Board of Education separately.

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# **I. Executive Summary**

## I. Executive Summary

### Introduction

The Francis Howell, R-III School District encompasses over 150 square miles in the southeast corner of St. Charles County and is one of the largest school districts in the State of Missouri. With an enrollment of over 18,000 students and approximately 2,200 employees, the Francis Howell Learning Community works everyday to provide a consistent and comprehensive education that fosters high levels of academic achievement for all.

The history of the Francis Howell School District dates back to 1825. Through mergers, the District became the Consolidated School District No. 2 of St. Charles County in 1915 and as a result of additional mergers, the District became the Francis Howell Reorganized #3 School District in 1951. The District serves portions of the municipalities of St. Charles, St. Peters and O'Fallon as well as Cottleville, Weldon Spring, New Melle and unincorporated areas of St. Charles County. The District experienced significant population growth beginning in early 1970 that continued through the new millennium. Over the last five years, student enrollment has shown a slight decline on a year-over-year basis. While annual fluctuation growth is likely, the District will experience a reduction in student enrollment of approximately 1% over the next five years. The Francis Howell School District Comprehensive School Improvement Plan is based on the following assumptions:

- The existing building organization alignment is appropriate and the District will continue with that structure with only a slight balancing of school enrollment during the next five year period.
- District neighborhood schools are desirable, and will continue to provide consistent, high quality instructional programs at locations in close proximity to where students reside.
- Funding for District initiatives will show a gradual growth rate of 4% to 6% during the next five years.
- While the total number and location of District buildings is adequate to meet student needs in the short-term, significant renovation of Francis Howell High School, installation of improved safety and security systems and a limited expansion of some school sites will need to occur.
- The District is resolute in its commitment to achieving all Missouri School Improvement Program and federal No Child Left Behind standards.

## **OVERVIEW**

The Francis Howell R-III School District continues to make progress toward its mission of being a learning community where all students reach their full potential. The District currently provides high quality instructional programs to over 18,000 students Kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade and an additional 8,000 students in its early childhood education programs.

### **Facilities**

The District's educational facilities include ten elementary schools, five middle schools and three high schools; three early childhood buildings; and two alternative high schools. The District also has two operational support buildings and an administration building.

### **Personnel Resource**

The District employs approximately 2,200 staff members to assist in student learning. Personnel costs account for 81.2% of the District's total operating expenditures. The student to teacher ratio is 21.4:1 for the District as a whole, 22.5:1 for elementary schools, 19.1:1 for middle schools and 22:1 for high schools.

### **District Culture**

Francis Howell is committed to the continuation of the Professional Learning Community (PLC) school improvement model. Now in its fourth year of implementation, the PLC model has expanded to all schools that comprise the District. The PLC model, created in the 1990's by Richard DuFour, is a school improvement plan characterized by a focus on student learning, regular and systematic teacher collaboration, shared decision making and attention to results. Working together collaboratively, people in a PLC focus on four critical questions: What do we want students to learn; how will we know when each student has learned the essential knowledge and skills; what happens in our school when a student does not learn; and what happens when a student already knows the material. The PLC model is viewed by the District as the most effective approach to achieving excellence for all students at all grade levels.

The PLC model for school improvement relies heavily upon continuing professional development for teachers and administrators. Francis Howell supports the PLC model for professional

development through an ongoing partnership with Lindenwood University. The University delivers graduate-level coursework targeted specifically to the needs of the District's PLC initiative. The partnership not only focuses the District's professional development efforts, but allows for meaningful training for our faculty with minimal time spent away from the classroom.

## **Financial**

Funding for the District's initiatives is derived from three primary revenue sources that account for over 85% of the District's total operating revenue – property taxes, a state-wide sales tax, and revenue from the state foundation formula. The District receives over half of its total operating revenue from local property taxes. The District is fortunate to have a stable and growing tax base. Revenue from sales tax is essentially level, with an increased per pupil amount being offset by the gradual decline in student population. In the recent past, the District has established a healthy balance between current revenue and expenditures and end of year balances are sufficient to cash flow the District. The District's bonding capacity is adequate to meet its construction needs in the foreseeable future.

Francis Howell is committed to a financial plan that ensures the District can continue to provide its employees with competitive wages, meet the ongoing costs of ancillary services and maintain facilities that are conducive to a safe and caring learning environment.

## **Technology**

The use of technology to support high levels of learning is essential to students and teachers as school districts strive to meet federal and state academic standards. Effective application of educational and information technology is being utilized in Francis Howell schools to meet the needs of students, teachers and parents. The District is focused on selectively utilizing the most effective instructional technology in the classroom. United Streaming and video conferencing offers classroom teachers the ability to go beyond the four walls of the classroom and expand on the lesson to cover virtually all topics. Mobile notebook carts and interactive polling devices enable classrooms to become an interactive and cost-effective computer lab. The District's Transforming Teaching with Technology (T3) program is providing the greatest number of students and teachers with access to technological hardware such as computers, laptops, SMART Boards and digital cameras. The T3 program provides professional development in integrating technology using inquiry-based learning strategies for teachers so they are well prepared to meet the needs of technology-savvy students.

## Community Partnerships

A primary goal of our Comprehensive School Improvement Plan is to grow partnerships with our families, patrons and business leaders that will further strengthen the Francis Howell community and assist our District in making effective decisions. The District utilizes all available media to establish and build on positive relationships, including internal and external publications, e-mail correspondence, district-wide, building and teacher websites, building newsletters, town hall meetings and community engagement focus groups.

During the 2005-2006 school year, the District established seven strategic planning committees chaired by a Board of Education Director to address the major functional areas of the District. The functional areas included: Academics, Finance, Enrollment, Operations, Facilities, Personnel, and Communication. The Strategic Planning Committees conducted needs assessments, held open forums for the community, and wrote plans with input from parents, teachers, students and community members. As the strategic plan began its implementation phase during the 2006-2007 school year, the original committees were reduced to six Strategic Planning Committees: Academics, Finance and Operations, Human Resources, Communications, Facilities, and Policy. These committees are co-chaired by a Board of Education Director and a District administrator. Sub-committees are established where required by statute or good practice, and short-term task forces are utilized to investigate and make recommendations on specific initiatives.

Community engagement focus groups and a district-wide climate survey conducted during the 2006-2007 school year determined that District patrons most often receive information about the District through electronic sources – either through eNews or the District website. The District is committed to advancing awareness and understanding of District initiatives through the effective use of technology. The District will commit funds to improve current electronic communication capabilities to further enhance partnerships with the Francis Howell community.

In support of our commitment to grow partnerships with our families, the District is implementing a comprehensive parent involvement plan for the 2007-2008 school year to enhance school climate, provide our families improved service, and connect Francis Howell families with others in our schools and community.

The 2007-2008 Francis Howell School Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP) is a living document that guides all District decision making. Our CSIP is the road map that guides our journey toward achieving excellence through a collaborative culture that values students, parents, employees and the community as partners in learning.

## **II. Planning Participants**

## II. Planning Participants

### 2005-2006 Committee Members

Communications		
Mrs.	Balance	Community Member
Greg	Batenhorst	Administrator
Donna	Carlson	Faculty
Ed	Gettemeier	Administrator
Sharon	Gillette	Community Member
Linda	Hess	Faculty
Jim	Joyce	District
Kevin	Palmer	Key Contributor
Bill	Spencer	Board of Education
Michelle	Speno	Support Staff
Chris	Tennill	Key Contributor
Ken	Schaller	Board of Education
Curriculum & Instruction		
Bob	Farr	Board of Education
Angie	Farrell	Faculty
Declan	Fitzpatrick	District
Sharon	Gillette	Support Staff
Terri	Hoehn	Community Member
Carolyn	Neal	Key Contributor
Jim	Roble	Faculty
Renee	Schuster	Community Member
Pam	Sloan	Administrator
Ellen	Waterman	Key Contributor
Deena	Winkeler	Community Member
Enrollment		
Eugene	Buehne	Key Contributor
Wes	Garton	Key Contributor
Amy	Johnston	Administrator
Bob	Kane	Community Member
Stacey	Kastner	Faculty
Patty	Knight	Support Staff
Mike	Sloan	District
Mike	Sommer	Board of Education
Beverly	Sweeney	Key Contributor
Facilities		
Sonny	Arnel	Administrator
Jeff	Blanton	Key Contributor
Julie	Elfrink	Faculty
Cathy	Fortney	Faculty
Suzanne	Matyiko	Community Member
Gary	Miget	Support Staff
Amy	Palmasano	Support Staff
Kevin	Palmer	Key Contributor
Rick	Pavia	District
Cherril	Price	Faculty
Terry	Stewart	Community Member
Dana	Tennill	Key Contributor
Anne	Womack	Board of Education

## 2005-2006 Committee Members Con't

Finance		
Jack	Ameis	Administrator
John	Andrews	Key Contributor
Dave	Bauer	Community Member
Marian	Benenati	Support Staff
Wayne	Brower	Key Contributor
DeeDee	Devereaux	Support Staff
Steve	Griggs	Administrator
Mark	Lafata	Board of Education
Chris	Starkey	Key Contributor
Kevin	Supple	District
Jerry	Thornton	Faculty
Anne	Tolfson	Community Member
Mike	VanBeers	Faculty
Operations		
Terry	Black	Board of Education
Dave	Daniels	Faculty
Chris	Greiner	Administrator
Carl	Kracke	Support Staff
Sue	McDaniels	John Weldon Spec. Ed.
Gary	Miget	Key Contributor
Kim	Moody	Faculty
Virginia	Owens	Support Staff
Paulette	Detterman	Chartwells Representative
David	Ross	Key Contributor
Brian	Schick	Administrator
Julie	Scholl	Faculty
Mike	Sloan	District
Personnel		
David	Bedsgrove	Parent
Travis	Bracht	Dean of Students
Rhonda	Brown	Board of Education
Carrie	Casity	Key Contributor
Amy	Collier	District
Stacey	Enders	Support Staff
Kelly	Helmick	Administrator
Shelly	Hoffman	Faculty
Karen	Levy	Parent

## 2006-2007 Committee Members

Strategic Planning Oversight		
Emily	Allen	Administrator
David	Besgrove	Community Member
Terry	Black	Board of Education
Bob	Farr	Board of Education
Chris	Greiner	Administrator
Steve	Griggs	District
Marie	Haupt	Faculty
Mary	Hendricks-Harris	District
Linda	Hess	FHEA
Marty	Hodits	Board of Education
Terrie	Hoehn	Community Member
Shelley	Hoffman	Faculty
Mark	Lafata	Board of Education
Cindy	Miller	Faculty
Marty	Sanders	Community Member
Sandy	Sanders	Board of Education
Mark	Schaller	Board of Education
Jerry	Thornton	Faculty
Academic		
Kevin	Armour	Administrator
Cynthia	Bice	Community Member
Ann	Borgmeyer	District
Woody	Borgschulte	Administrator
Rick	Boyle	Lindenwood Partner
Bob	Farr	Board of Education
Sharon	Gillette	Faculty
Keiren	Greenhouse	Faculty
Chris	Greiner	Administrator
Mary Jo	Griffin	District
Steve	Griggs	District
Mary	Hendricks-Harris	District
Linda	Hess	FHEA
Terrie	Hoehn	Faculty
Ted	Huff	Administrator
Jim	Joyce	District
Greg	Knight	Faculty
Carolyn	Neal	Community Member
Vicky	Readenour	Faculty
Jim	Roble	Faculty
Pam	Sloan	District
Sharon	Wall	District
Ellen	Waterman	Administrator
Deena	Winkler	Community Member
Communication		
Todd	Berck	Administrator
Eugene	Buehne	District
Donna	Carlson	Faculty
Teri	Harding	Faculty
Jill	Haynes	Faculty
Linda	Hess	FHEA
Jim	Joyce	District
Bridget	Kostello	Community Member
Patty	Lee	Faculty
Becky	Lynch	Administrator
Jennifer	Nichols	District
Sam	Routt	Community Member
Jon	Schultz	Administrator
Berkely	Smith	Community Member
Bill	Spencer	Board of Education

## 2006-2007 Committee Members Con't

Facilities		
Chris	Barth	Faculty
Keith	Canova	Community Member
Cindi	Crigler	Administrator
Ray	Eernisse	District
Julie	Elfrink	Faculty
Art	Goebel	Administrator
Rick	Pavia	District
Cherril	Price	Faculty
Mike	Sloan	District
Dana	Tennill	Community Member
Anne	Womack	Board of Education
Finance & Operations		
Jack	Ameis	Administrator
John	Andrews	Community Member
David	Bauer	Community Member
Marian	Benenati	Faculty
Terry	Black	Board of Education
Dee Dee	Devereux	Support Staff
Larry	Doyle	Lindenwood
Steve	Griggs	District
Mark	Lafata	Board of Education
Gary	Miget	District
Virginia	Owens	Support Staff
Brian	Schick	Administrator
Julie	Scholl	Faculty
Chris	Starkey	Community Member
Kevin	Supple	Administrator
Jerry	Thornton	Faculty
Ann	Tolefson	Community Member
Mike	VanBeers	Faculty
Human Resources		
David	Besgrove	Community Member
Travis	Bracht	Administrator
Amy	Collier	District
Stacey	Enders	Support Staff
Dave	Kuhar	District
Brenda	Parisi	Faculty
Ken	Schaller	Board of Education
Shelley	Hoffman	Faculty
Policy		
Renee	Schuster	Superintendent
Bill	Spencer	Board of Education
Marty	Hodits	Board of Education
Darlene	Jones	Administrator
Pam	Sloan	District
Kevin	Supple	District
Ray	Eernisse	District
Amy	Collier	District
Jim	Joyce	District
Tom	Mickes	Attorney

### **III. Analysis of Internal And External Factors**

### **III. Analysis of Internal and External Factors** **(Conducted during the 2005-2006 school year)**

#### **District Enrollment**

Strategic planning in a school district is heavily influenced by enrollment trends and projections. Resources must be committed to efficiently and effectively serve the needs of the District students and community. While numerous economic and political decisions can impact District growth, it is probable the District will experience a steady population decrease of 1-2% annually over the next five year period. This will reflect a decrease of 100-200 students each year, and result in a District enrollment of approximately 17,500 students by 2010. This gradual decline in student population will allow District planners to appropriately address facility improvements and instructional program enhancements during the next few years.

#### **Future Focus**

1. The District will experience a continued slow but steady decline in overall student population in the foreseeable future. The District is expected to see enrollment decline of approximately 100-200 students annually during the next five year period. Annual enrollment projections are as follows:
  - 2005-06 Actual – 18,195
  - 2006-07 Estimate – 18,046
  - 2007-08 Estimate – 17,935
  - 2008-09 Estimate – 17,817
  - 2009-10 Estimate – 17,756
  - 2010-11 Estimate – 17,598
2. The decline in student enrollment will not be consistent in all attendance areas, and will not be consistent from year to year.
  - a. Eight schools in the District will experience little change in student enrollment. Schools with generally stable enrollments include the following attendance areas: Becky-David Elementary School, Castlio Elementary School, Daniel Boone Elementary School, Henderson Elementary School, Harvest Ridge Elementary School, Warren Elementary School, Francis Howell Middle School, and Bryan Middle School.

- b. Seven schools in the District will serve fewer students. Schools that will experience some decline include the following attendance areas: Fairmount Elementary School, Independence Elementary School, Francis Howell North High School, Francis Howell Central High School, Barnwell Middle School, Hollenbeck Middle School, and Saeger Middle School.
  - c. Three school sites are expected to see moderate growth in student enrollment: Central Elementary School, John Weldon Elementary School, and Francis Howell High School.
- 3. While major shifts in attendance center boundaries will not be necessary, some fine-tuning of boundaries to achieve greater operational efficiency should be investigated.

There are several pockets in the District where students are transported some distance outside their normal attendance areas. While this may have been a reasonable practice when schools were experiencing over-crowded conditions, it is not logical to continue the practice in the long-term.

- 4. The District should review its utilization of alternative education programs in order to determine appropriate locations and services to be provided.

Assignment to alternative education programs cross normal attendance boundaries. The District should determine if current programs should be maintained or modified, and if present delivery sites are appropriate for the services provided.

## District Finances

The financial condition of the Francis Howell School District is the result of a multitude of factors, some of which are beyond the control of school officials. District current revenue is dependent on a combination of local taxes paid by residents and businesses (67%) and state assistance provided through the Foundation Formula and certain categorical financial aid programs (28%). Revenue from federal sources equal only about 5% of the District's budget, and those funds are committed to specific programs required by federal law.

The District has seen inconsistent growth in annual current revenue during the last five year period. The revenue growth has averaged 5%. Projections into the future suggest that the revenue growth rate of the District will be moderate, based on several factors.

1. The condition of the Missouri State Budget. While it appears that the Francis Howell School District will benefit from recent changes in the Foundation Formula, there is some concern that revenues projected from the state will not meet expectations over the long-term.
2. While growth in the local tax base seems likely to continue, the Hancock Amendment will negate substantial increases in District revenue.
3. The special purpose levy of \$.20, approved by voters in 2004, will expire in 2009.

In the recent past, the District has re-established a healthy balance between current revenue and expenditures. End-of-year balances for June, 2006 are estimated to be 19% of annual expenditures, which is more than sufficient to meet unexpected crises and avoid the need for short-term debt. During the next five year period, the District should make spending commitments to ensure that expenditures do not exceed current available revenue. This will not occur in the 2006-07 school year, due to significant expenditure commitments already made for the next three year period. However, revenue is expected to again exceed necessary expenditures in the 2007-08 school year, and remain balanced for the remainder of the five year period.

With the stabilization of enrollment growth, the District will have ample bonding capacity to address any facility construction and renovation needs in the immediate future. Though the outstanding long-term debt (principal and interest) totals \$227,000,000, it is well below the bonding capacity of 15% of assessed evaluation allowed by Missouri statute. However, significant additional bond issues will be limited by the ability of the District to fund new issues with the current debt-service levy (\$.67). The District's current tax levy is \$4.72. The levy includes \$.67 committed to make payments of bond issue principal and interest.

## Future Focus

1. The District can expect revenue growth in the normal range (4% to 6% annually) in the foreseeable future without an increase in the property tax rate.

The revised Missouri School Foundation Formula, if fully funded, will benefit the District through steady annual increases in state financial aid. The local assessed valuation is expected to continue to grow, providing the school district with consistent but modest increases in annual local tax revenues.

2. The District must exercise fiscal discipline to ensure that annual expenditures do not exceed future revenue.

The District should avoid major expenditures for facilities, personnel, and programs that exceed anticipated revenue. Although the District is committed to expenditures that will likely result in a deficit budget for the 2006-07 school year, judicious management of tax dollars should limit further deficit spending beyond that date.

3. End-of-year balances are more than adequate, and should be maintained at approximately 15% of annual operational costs in future budgets.

The end-of-year balance in the operations funds is anticipated to be approximately \$27,500,000 in June of 2006. It is likely to dip by about \$2,500,000 in July, 2007. An end-of-year balance of 15% is generally assumed to be appropriate to avoid borrowing for cash flow purposes, and to deal with routine unexpected crises. The District should strive to maintain end-of-year balances in the 15-20% range in future years.

4. The District's bonding capacity is sufficient to meet the legitimate construction needs in the foreseeable future.

While the District's legal bonding capacity (15% of assessed evaluation) provides almost unlimited bonding capacity for the District, the amount of additional debt that can be funded with the current tax levy (\$.67) is much more limited. Even assuming voter approval of no-tax increase bond issues, the maximum amount of new debt that can be supported with the current levy will be approximately \$60,000,000 over the next five year period. The District should carefully plan its facility and renovation needs and request that voters approve only essential amounts of funding for capital projects.

5. The District should strive to maintain the \$.25 voluntary rollback of the current tax levy, utilizing this source of funds only if required by unforeseen circumstances.

School district patrons have been very supportive of District needs during the rapid growth period. The current tax levy of \$4.72, even with the \$.25 voluntary rollback, ranks highest among the five school districts in the County. The District should continue to utilize any opportunities at its disposal to keep the tax levy modest for patrons. It is reassuring for the District to have access to the \$.25 voluntary rollback, if future conditions require additional spending to address unexpected events.

6. The District should expand its annual budget commitment to facility maintenance and repair needs to address routine building and grounds maintenance costs.

Most routine facility and maintenance repair costs should be funded in the annual operations budget, and should not require long-term debt (bond issues) to cover the cost. The current District budget includes a basic amount (\$2,000,000) to address the routine maintenance needs. While a step in the right direction, this amount does not nearly cover maintenance needs, and should be increased annually over the next five years, until the amount budgeted is sufficient to address facility maintenance needs for a district with over \$400,000,000 of assets in facilities and grounds.

## **District Facilities**

The Francis Howell School District is comprised of 18 school buildings and nine other sites that total 2,554,200 square feet, located on approximately 740 acres of ground. Facility utilization includes 10 elementary schools, 5 middle schools, 3 high schools, and 9 other facilities. The replacement value of the facilities is estimated to be in excess of \$300,000,000. Facilities range in age from fairly old to recently built. The bulk of the facilities were constructed in the 1980s and 1990s during a rapid growth period in the District.

If the projected enrollment decline occurs as expected, the District will have no need to construct additional school locations in the next five year period. However, moderate growth in some attendance centers may necessitate some additional facility construction. The lack of maintenance at the Francis Howell High School during the past decade will require a substantial commitment of resources to upgrade that facility.

The maintenance needs of school facilities is a major budget function. The District has relied heavily upon utilizing bond issue revenue to accomplish routine maintenance tasks that would normally be included in the annual operations budget. The District is now increasing its commitment to facility maintenance through the annual budget process.

An administrative staff review of District facilities has produced a list of renovation and major system repair needs throughout the District. In addition, the District has developed a technology plan that integrates technology requirements into District facilities. It is important that future facility renovations include the basic technology infrastructure that can address expected technological enhancements.

## Future Focus

1. The District possesses sufficient debt service fund revenues to address legitimate new construction/renovation needs during the next five year period.

The current debt service levy (\$.67) produces approximately \$13,000,000 annually to pay off long-term debt over the next twenty year period. Projections suggest that approximately \$60,000,000 of new long-term debt could become available over the next five year period (assuming voter approval of no-tax increase bond issues). Since no new school sites/buildings would be required to serve the declining enrollment, this amount should be more than sufficient to provide for major facility renovation needs. The District should create a task force to establish a five year plan for essential renovation projects.

2. Declining District enrollment will result in excess space in some District facilities.

All school buildings have at some point in the past served more students than are currently enrolled. Several facilities have far less students currently in attendance than were enrolled at its high point. Utilization of this space should be critically reviewed. Where feasible, programs should be combined to provide greater efficiencies, and support services should be distributed to existing space to enhance efficiency of service delivery. Initially, a study should be made to determine desirable capacity and usage of each facility.

3. Francis Howell High School is in need of significant renovation and site improvement.

This school facility was built in stages, with little regard to what the final product would look like. It has many maintenance and repair needs. However, the 275,000 square foot facility is sound, and with careful planning, can be restructured into a very attractive, comprehensive facility that will serve students well for many years to come. A task force of construction professionals should be initiated to refine renovation strategy for the facility.

4. The District should plan for renovations at several of the older school buildings, as well as improvements to some classroom units as recommended by DESE.

The District needs a comprehensive plan for facility improvement in its older school buildings. While some costs can be addressed through the annual District operations budget, it is possible that some bond issue commitment may be required to bring these facilities up to District standards. New classroom regulations recommended by DESE will impact safety planning in high school science laboratories and industry technology classrooms. In addition, several school buildings may need some expansion to address growth issues.

5. The District should investigate low-cost solutions to phase out the annex facility, leased space, and other non-essential District-owned facilities, and relocate the services housed there to other existing or new facilities in the district.

The annex facility is the last remaining vestige of the World War II era, and has fallen into major disrepair. It should be dismantled, and the services based at the annex facility should be relocated. Where possible, workers currently centralized in the annex facility should be reassigned to locations where their services are delivered, reducing the need for both facility space and travel time.

## **District Instructional Program**

Student achievement in the Francis Howell School District, while somewhat above average when compared to Missouri school districts in general, fall in the average range when compared to school districts of like size. The thorough assessment of instructional program outcomes currently underway in the District has revealed some strengths, as well as a number of areas of significant concern regarding student achievement as measured by the Missouri Assessment Program and the No Child Left Behind Act.

For several years the District has been committed to the Professional Learning Communities (PLC) model for school improvement. This comprehensive plan has been initiated to various degrees at the eighteen different schools that comprise the District. The PLC model, created in the 1990s by Richard DuFour, is viewed by the District as a legitimate approach to enhancing student achievement for all students at all grade levels.

## **Future Focus**

1. The District should continue and expand recent efforts to critically review its academic performance, and focus primary attention on producing higher student achievement at all levels.

The self-analysis conducted this year, while stressful to the District, has produced excellent information regarding instructional areas to be targeted for improvement. The self-analysis should be followed with specific action plans that hold attendance centers accountable for the performance gains of students served.

2. The District should restructure its academic program decision-making process by providing greater authority to those closest to the student: teachers and building administrators.

An instructional program review procedure is needed to increase involvement in instructional program planning by the faculty and building administrators. A restructured curriculum development procedure should result in a systematic process to review all instructional programs and outcomes, with primary focus on enhanced student achievement.

3. The District should maximize opportunity for student-teacher interaction, and eliminate conditions that remove the teacher from the classroom.

Considerable instruction time is lost by scheduling classroom teachers out of the classroom to participate in meetings throughout the school year. Curriculum development efforts should be concentrated largely during non-teaching times, with the appropriate stipends for teachers who participate outside the regular workday and/or standard school year. Likewise, a review of daily school schedules should be conducted to enhance opportunities for student-teacher interaction during the regular school schedule.

4. The District should thoroughly evaluate the benefits and long-term viability of any new instructional programs considered for adoption, and regularly review existing programs to insure the “highest and best” use of personnel and resources.

The District has implemented a number of new programs that have not lived up to expectations. Often, programs have been adopted with inadequate resources and the absence of a comprehensive commitment to evaluate its impact in any measurable way. The District should conduct a review of these recently adopted programs, and either eliminate the program or commit to a systematic implementation strategy. Qualified personnel involved in these programs could fill other vacant positions in the District where greater impact upon student learning is likely.

5. The District should expand its professional development program to provide a comprehensive, system-wide approach to address student learning expectations.

The PLC model for school improvement relies heavily upon continuing professional development for teachers and administrators. Some attendance center teachers and administrators are deeply involved in professional development, while other attendance centers have much lower levels of participation. A system-wide professional development strategy that reaches all teachers and administrators, and that provides essential knowledge of improvement strategies should be established. In addition, specific professional development programs should be created to address identified needs, including: 1) mentoring of new teachers, 2) orientation of new administrators, 3) content area workshops for subject matter teachers, and 4) advanced study in implementation of the PLC school improvement model.

## District Personnel

Employment levels in the Francis Howell School District have grown steadily during the past five year period. Total employment has increased from 1699 in the 2001-02 school year to 2047 in the 2005-06 school year.

Employment by job category is reflected below:

<b>Category</b>	<b>2001-02</b>	<b>2005-06</b>
Administrative	67	74
Certified	1,205	1,268
Classified	<u>427</u>	<u>705</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1699</b>	<b>2047</b>

When compared to school districts in Missouri, District pupil-teacher ratios are higher than average. In the 2004-05 school term, FHSD classroom teachers served students on the basis of one teacher to 21 students, compared to a statewide average of 19 students. District teachers are likely to pursue higher education. Last year, 65% of FHSD teachers possessed a Masters degree or higher, compared with 50% statewide.

## Future Focus

1. The District should limit further expansion of its employee base, and should experience slight reduction in total employment as student enrollment declines.

Declining enrollment in the District should allow policy makers to cap off employment growth, and use resources to improve the quality of existing staff. Additional professional development for certified staff and training for classified staff, as well as competitive remuneration, will result in higher levels of performance and accountability within the District's workforce.

2. The District should review the deployment of professional staff employees who are not assigned essential teaching responsibilities.

The District provides for a number of certified positions not required by DESE standards or commonly found in most Missouri school districts. A review of the value of these positions to determine the impact on student learning should be conducted. Where possible, reassignment of personnel to increase direct classroom teacher-pupil involvement should be considered.

While there are contradictory opinions about the impact of teacher-pupil ratios on student performance, there is little doubt that good teachers improve student achievement. The cost to the District to reduce the classroom teacher-pupil ratio by one student would exceed \$2,000,000 annually. Any such funds would be far better spent by employing and supporting excellent teachers with a successful track record in enhancing student performance.

3. The District should conduct a review of all job descriptions, accountability expectations, and performance measurements/procedures for all employee categories.

Over time, District needs change, job descriptions become outdated, and performance measurement/procedures are taken for granted. A systematic review of evaluation procedures and accountability standards should be conducted for all employee groups during the next several year period.

## **District Operations**

District operations include five components: Transportation Services, Food Services, Health Services, Technology Services, and Plant and Grounds Care Services.

The Transportation Services component is a contracted service that involves 181 drivers with 178 vehicles that make over 72,000 trips annually at an annual cost of \$9,000,000 to the District. The current contract with Laidlaw Transportation Company was re-evaluated and renewed in 2006.

The Food Services component is a contracted service that involves 166 workers at 18 preparation sites and produces over 3,000,000 meals annually. Total food service costs are over \$4,600,000 annually. Meal charges and state/federal food service assistance are expected to fully offset program costs.

The Health Services component employs 28 registered nurses who provide routine nursing services, as well as vision and hearing screening at all school sites. Nurses work with building administrators and faculty to implement the health curriculum as a part of the program of studies.

The Technology Services component includes 22 staff, and involves providing support for all District functions that utilize technology. Areas significantly impacted by the Technology Services include assistance with student information management, financial management, instructional support, and communications procedures.

The District has made a significant commitment of resources to technology, and is recognized as a leader among its peer group of school districts.

The Plant and Grounds Care Services component involves 52 maintenance and 111 custodial employees to care for 2.5 million square feet of facilities and over 740 acres of school grounds. Currently operating out of the “ANNEX”, it utilizes 43 vehicles to move workers to the work site location as needed. The current base of operation (ANNEX) is in bad repair.

## **Future Focus**

1. The District should review personnel deployment and consider realignment of existing staff to ensure the highest level of productivity in the support services.

While centralized services provide some advantage, the time and expense lost in travel to work sites often overshadows any benefits. Reassigning some additional employees directly to attendance areas may improve efficiencies and response time while reducing travel costs.

2. The District should annually review all contracted services to maintain high performance levels at reasonable costs.

When not reviewed regularly and thoroughly, some vendors tend to become complacent and less committed to controlling costs. An annual performance review of all major service suppliers with a comprehensive review every three years, reminds the vendor to keep the best interests of the District in the forefront.

The District may also wish to conduct an objective study of the advantages and disadvantages of establishing its own transportation and food services operations.

3. The District should plan for the demolition of the “ANNEX”, with reassignment of personnel to other existing space, or by construction of a low cost, more efficient facility.

The current ANNEX is too large, is difficult to maintain and supervise, and poorly located. If the reassignment of personnel to other existing facilities is not practical, a much smaller plant should be constructed in a centralized location.

## **District Communications/Community Relations**

As one of the largest school districts in Missouri, the importance of relating effectively with patrons, staff, students, and the community at large is a difficult task. The District uses a variety of tools to establish positive relationships, including internal and external publications, e-mail correspondence, building newsletters, and town hall meetings. The District effectively utilizes technology to assist parents in maintaining current knowledge of their child's activities in school.

## **Future Focus**

1. The District should consistently make available to all stakeholders information about District operations.

The various school sites in the District address the communications process independently, without the benefit of a comprehensive plan, timetable, and information clearinghouse. A system-wide procedure that provides administrators with general expectations and timelines for community relations activities would enhance the consistency and effectiveness of communication efforts.

2. The District should reorganize its committee structure to integrate activities into a cohesive umbrella of planning.

Estimates of the number of existing District committees range from 80 to 120 committees. This number is far too burdensome to manage. The creation of seven standing board committees (each chaired by a Board member) to address the major functional areas in the Strategic Plan would ensure continuing attention to District issues. When needed, subcommittees would be established where required by statute or good practice, and short-term task forces would be created to investigate and recommend on specific matters that cross lines of committee responsibility.

3. The District should formulate a comprehensive plan to foster volunteer involvement of parents, patrons, and business leaders into service for the District.

While some District schools make good use of volunteers, other attendance centers can significantly expand volunteer involvement. At the District level, a subcommittee of business leaders could be very helpful in analyzing financial issues and recommending operational efficiencies. A system-wide strategy for volunteer recognition could encourage greater volunteer participation.

4. The District should expand its public relations efforts to effectively communicate the positive aspects of school activities to the news media, parents, patrons, and taxpayers.

Parents want to read positive news articles about their school and their children. While the Superintendent must be the “chief public relations officer”, a staff member assigned to produce regular news articles about students for media use can create positive attitudes about the District. When the District addresses the future reorganization of the communications function, additional efforts should be made to insure a steady flow of positive information about District students, employees, and schools to the local media.

## **IV. Mission, Vision, Values, and Goals**

## **IV. Mission, Vision, Values, and Goals**

### **Mission**

Francis Howell School District is a learning community where all students reach their full potential.

### **Vision**

Francis Howell School District is an educational leader that builds excellence through a collaborative culture that values students, parents, employees, and the community as partners in learning.

### **Values**

Francis Howell School District is committed to:

- Providing a consistent and comprehensive education that fosters high levels of academic achievement for all
- Operating safe and well-maintained schools
- Promoting parent, community, student, and business involvement in support of the school district
- Ensuring fiscal responsibility
- Developing character and leadership

### **Overarching Goals**

Francis Howell School District will strive for excellence in:

- Academic Achievement
- Safety and Security
- Fiscal Responsibility
- Strategic Planning

## **V. Strategic Goals and Objectives**

## V. Strategic Goals and Objectives

Each year, the District's administration and the Board of Education take time to review the successes of the District and set direction for the next fiscal year. Through this effort the following list of goals and objectives were set for 2007-2008:

1. Continue to identify learning gaps and align strategies to advance learning for all students.
2. Continue the District's commitment to the Professional Learning Community school improvement model at all buildings and grade levels through comprehensive adult learning and professional development initiatives.
3. Develop a comprehensive district-wide safety and security strategy including crisis response plan.
4. Develop a financial plan to support the long-term operating and capital needs of the District.
5. Optimize learning environment by finalizing school day schedules at elementary, middle, and high levels, balancing school enrollment, and maximizing the use of staff, resources, and facilities.
6. Advance awareness and understanding of District initiatives, goals, and objectives through effective use of technology and other community partnerships.

## **VI. Tactical Action Plans**

## VI. Tactical Action Plans

### 2007-2008 Academic Improvement Plan

#### ACHIEVEMENT FIVE YEAR GOAL STATEMENT:

FHSD will meet all Annual Performance Report (APR) indicators with High 1 and a minimum of fifteen subgroups will meet Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) proficiency targets. (9.1 - 9.6)

#### ACHIEVEMENT ONE YEAR GOAL STATEMENT:

FHSD will increase by two the number of Annual Performance Report (APR) indicators that meet with High 1 and increase by one the number of subgroups who meet Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) proficiency targets. (9.1 - 9.6)

PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION				MONITORING			PROGRESS	
Standard	Action Steps	Roles / Responsibilities	Resources / Costs	Monitored By	Monitoring Data	Monitoring Dates	Progress Made / Data Source	Adjustments Needed
<b>STRATEGY #1: Each school will set a SMART (strategic, measurable, attainable, results-oriented, time bound) goal in the improvement areas of achievement, attendance, behavior, and climate. (8.1-8.2)</b>								
8.1-8.2	Conduct annual site improvement trainings to set expectations based on annual review of district progress.	Academic Team	\$18,400 (4x23x\$100x2 trainings)	Chief Academic Officer	School Improvement Plan	Spring		
8.1-8.2	Conduct three site visits per school by various academic team members and the superintendent to review progress toward meeting the annual goals.	Academic Team Superintendent	\$0	Chief Academic Officer	Local data, APR, AYP, site visit artifact requirement	Site visit schedule		
<b>STRATEGY #2: Continue support and development of professional learning communities (6.7.1-6.7.6)</b>								
6.7.1 6.7.6	Partner with Lindenwood University and RPDC to provide district identified professional development.	Director, Adult Learning Chief Financial Officer Chief Academic Officer Superintendent	\$140,000	Director, Adult Learning	Professional development survey, Lindenwood University survey	Fall Spring		
6.7.1 6.7.6	Review and revise daily schedule to allow for regular teacher collaboration time and student interventions.	District and site leadership	\$15,000	District and site leadership	TBD	TBD		
<b>STRATEGY #3: Vertically align the core curriculums PK-12 (6.1.1-6.1.4)</b>								
6.1.1	Collect, analyze, compare and use essential data to revise current curriculum so that it aligns to state requirements. (6.1.1)	Director, Student Learning Content Leaders	\$87,000	Director, Student Learning	APR, AYP, local assessments	Ongoing throughout the year		
6.1.4	Monitor curriculum implementation.	Director, Student Learning Content Leaders	\$73,000	Director, Student Learning	APR, AYP, local assessments	Ongoing throughout the year		
6.2.2	Evaluate, revise and develop quality assessments that predict student achievement.	Director, Assessment	\$0	Director, Assessment	Audit tool data	Quarterly		

## 2007-2008 Academic Improvement Plan Con't

PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION				MONITORING			PROGRESS	
Standard	Action Steps	Roles / Responsibilities	Resources / Costs	Monitored By	Monitoring Data	Monitoring Dates	Progress Made / Data Source	Adjustments Needed
<b>STRATEGY #4: Create a long-term professional development program that improves teaching and increases student learning. (6.7)</b>								
6.7.1 6.7.2	Partner with Lindenwood University to provide district identified professional development.	Director, Adult Learning Chief Financial Officer Chief Academic Officer Superintendent	\$140,000	Director, Adult Learning	Professional development survey, Lindenwood University survey	Fall Spring		
6.7.1 6.7.2	Provide year-long professional development on Marzano's instructional strategies following a train-the-trainer model of implementation.	Director, Adult Learning Quality Instructional Leaders (QILs) Principals	\$40,000	Director, Adult Learning	Implementation feedback tool	End of first quarter; 07/20/07		
<b>STRATEGY #5: Create and develop intentional parent partnerships teams at each school. (7.5)</b>								
7.5.1	Review school improvement plans to make sure that each school has embedded within its action steps plans for increasing parent involvement focusing on the site's two selected parent involvement keys.	Director, Parent Involvement (PI) PI Building Leader PI Action Team	\$20,000	Director, Parent Involvement	Advance Questionnaire parent participation responses	Fall		
7.5.1	Meet with every parent involvement Building leader in the first three, six and nine months of the school year to review the effectiveness of the strategies and action plans on student achievement.	Director, Parent Involvement	\$0	Director, Parent Involvement	3 month, 6 month, 9 month collection instrument	3 month, 6 month, 9 month data		

## 2007-2008 Safety and Security Plan

**ACHIEVEMENT FIVE YEAR GOAL STATEMENT:** FHSD will establish a district-wide culture that supports a safe and caring environment for all students and staff.

**ACHIEVEMENT ONE YEAR GOAL STATEMENT:** Develop a comprehensive District-wide safety and security strategy including crisis response plan.

PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION				MONITORING			PROGRESS	
Standard	Action Steps	Roles / Responsibilities	Resources / Costs	Monitored By:	Monitoring Data	Monitoring Dates	Progress Made / Data Source	Adjustments Needed
<b>STRATEGY #1: Develop and implement universal crisis response plan to meet site specific needs of all school buildings (Standard 8.1 – 8.2 – 8.9)</b>								
8.9 8.1 – 8.2	Orientate and implement revised emergency response procedures in all school buildings. Revise plan and update as needed	Director of Facilities and Operations  Building Principals  Safety Committee  Parents	\$5000	Superintendent  Director of Facilities and Operations	Site Inspections  Annual Operations Review	Ongoing  June 30, 2008  Annual Operations Review		
8.9 8.1 – 8.2	Conduct mandatory testing and inspections of alarms, sprinklers and boiler systems as required by statute	Director of Facilities and Operations	\$0	Director of Facilities and Operations	Site Inspections  Test Data	June 30, 2008		
8.9 8.1 – 8.2	Conduct mandatory lock down and evacuation drills	Director of Facilities and Operations  Building Administrators  State and Local Authorities	\$0	Director of Facilities and Operations  Building Administrators	Site Inspections  Annual Operations Review	June 30, 2008		

## 2007-2008 Financial Plan

### FINANCE FIVE YEAR GOAL STATEMENT:

Ensure sufficient financial resources are available to maintain adequate educational programs and services. (Standard 8.5.4)

### FINANCE ONE YEAR GOAL STATEMENT:

Effectively manage the District's operating and capital budgets. (Standard 8.5)

PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION				MONITORING			PROGRESS	
Standard	Action Steps	Roles / Responsibilities	Resources / Costs	Monitored By:	Monitoring Data	Monitoring Dates	Progress Made / Data Source	Adjustments Needed
<b>STRATEGY #1: Prepare a budget document that accurately reflects the Board's priorities for expenditures. (Standard 8.5.2)</b>								
8.5.2	Create budget and receive approval from the Board of Education by June 30.	CFO Director of Finance	Finance Department Staff	CFO Director of Finance	Budget Calendar Board Workshops Board Approval	Per Budget Calendar		
8.5.2	Submit budget to ASBO International for consideration for Meritorious Budget Award.	CFO Director of Finance	Submission Fee	CFO Director of Finance	Decision Letter from ASBO	Submission in July		
<b>STRATEGY #2: Provide the Board with regular updates on the District's finances. (Standard 8.5.1)</b>								
8.5.1	Prepare monthly financial reports for Board.	CFO	None	CFO	Timely submittal for Board consideration.			
<b>STRATEGY #3: Monitor the District's fund balances. (Standard 8.6.2)</b>								
8.6.2	Review on a monthly basis the reserves in the operating and capital funds.	CFO Director of Finance	None	CFO	Fund Balance Report	Monthly		
	Monitor District expenditures compared to budget to determine projections for fiscal year-end spending.	CFO Director of Finance	None	CFO	Monthly financial statements Monthly expenditure reports	Monthly		

## 2007-2008 Financial Plan Con't

PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION				MONITORING			PROGRESS	
Standard	Action Steps	Roles / Responsibilities	Resources / Costs	Monitored By:	Monitoring Data	Monitoring Dates	Progress Made / Data Source	Adjustments Needed
<b>STRATEGY #4: Implement District's new financial software. (Standard 8.6)</b>								
8.6	Conduct training workshops for building Financial Secretaries on new IFAS software	Finance Department Staff	Sub Pay for building personnel	CFO	Workshop sign-in sheets	Workshop Schedule		
8.6	Go live with core financials in September/October	Finance Department Staff	None	CFO CIO	Weekly Project Updates	Weekly		
8.6	Go live with payroll/HR in January 2008	Finance Department Staff Human Resources Staff	None	CFO CIO CHRO	Weekly Project Updates	Weekly		
<b>STRATEGY #5: Ensure the District's tax levy is accurate. (Standard 8.5.3)</b>								
8.5.3	Meet with County Assessors to determine assessment data for District	CFO Director of Finance	None	CFO	Assessed Value Data from Assessor	By August 15		
8.5.3	Set tax rate	CFO	None	CFO Superintendent	State Auditor's Forms	By September 1		

## 2007-2008 Strategic Planning Action Plan

**ACHIEVEMENT FIVE YEAR GOAL STATEMENT:** FHSD will ensure continuous improvement by using a strategic planning process that guides decision-making, focuses on student learning, and leads the school improvement process district-wide, resulting in the attainment of all indicators on the Annual Performance Report at a High 1 level. (Standards 8.1 - 8.9)

**ACHIEVEMENT ONE YEAR GOAL STATEMENT:** FHSD Board of Education will set annual priorities that result in improvement on at least 2 indicators on the Annual Performance Report.

PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION				MONITORING			PROGRESS	
Standard	Action Steps	Roles / Responsibilities	Resources / Costs	Monitored By:	Monitoring Data	Monitoring Dates	Progress Made / Data Source	Adjustments Needed
<b>STRATEGY #1:</b> The Board of Education will work in concert with District administration and the CSIP Steering Committee to plan, implement, evaluate, and revise the CSIP on an annual basis. (Standard 8.2)								
8.2	1. The Board will meet with the Steering Committee in the Spring to review progress, elicit community input, analyze data, and revise the CSIP as indicated	Superintendent BOE Steering Committee	Materials for meetings  Budget: \$500	Superintendent and BOE President	Revised CSIP Approved by Board on or before June 30 for upcoming year.	June 30		
8.2	2. The Board will meet with the Executive Cabinet for Board workshops to monitor progress and a planning retreat to set annual priorities	Superintendent BOE Cabinet	Materials for meetings  Budget: \$500	Superintendent and BOE President	Revised CSIP Approved by Board on or before June 30 for upcoming year.	June 30		

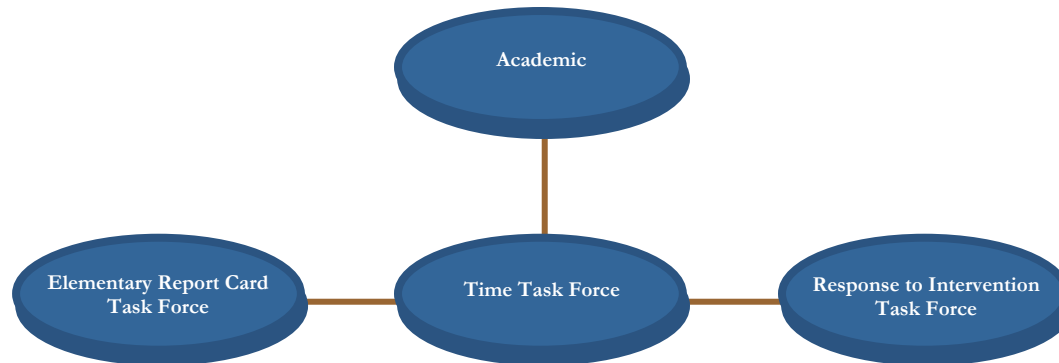
## Committee Structure and Process

### 2006-2007 Strategic Planning Committee Structure

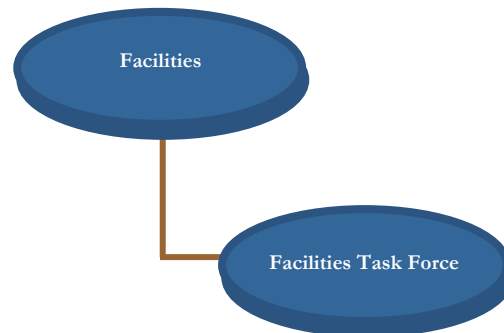


## Committee Structure and Process Con't

### 2006-2007 Academic Task Force Structure



### 2006-2007 Facilities Task Force Structure



## **VII. District Support in Development and Implementation of School Improvement Reports**

## VII. District Support in Development and Implementation of School Improvement Plans

### Site Improvement Planning and Implementation

Two sets of school improvement training sessions were offered for the 2007-2008 school year.

*Session One* training was for principals.

*Session Two* training was for principals and school improvement teams.

In both sessions, new learning was provided; school improvement plan templates reviewed, exemplars provided, expectations set; monitoring discussed.

### Training Session One

Offered training on three different days. Training included the following:

- Professional Learning Community (PLC) foundational review
- 18 critical issues
- School Improvement cycle
- Success Cycle
- Professional Learning Community (PLC) expectations
- Instructional Strategy Research – Marzano
- Effective strategies that make a difference – D. Reeves
- Common assessments
- Elective area and standards
- Power standards (CA3, 1.6, 1.10, 2.2, 3.5)
- Goal alignment
- SMART goal worksheet
- Team work time

## Training Session Two

Offered training for school improvement teams on three different days. Training included the following:

- Research on building internal capacity
  - High yield strategies
  - Effective schools correlates
- Understanding your Annual Performance Report (APR)
- National Staff Development Council (NSDC) Standards
- Department of Elementary and Secondary Education High Quality Professional Development
- FHSD site-based professional development guidelines
- Professional development organization frameworks
- Pyramid of interventions
- School Improvement Plan
  - Review 2006-2007
  - 2007-2008 template
  - School Improvement Plan (SIP) exemplars
  - Team work time

## Monitoring

Three site visits will be conducted during the year.

### Pre-visit

Data chart completed and turned in by the first day of school.

- Four goals set:
  - Achievement
  - Attendance
  - Behavior
  - Attitude (Climate)
- School Improvement Plan
- Date set for school improvement sharing with parents
- Professional development plan
- Parent involvement embedded in School Improvement Plan
- Benchmark school identified

### **Site Visit One – Early Fall**

- Review previous year's School Improvement Plan
- Review current year's School Improvement Plan
- Review Professional Learning Community (PLC) expectations
  - 45 minute collaboration time
  - PLC organizational teams
    - PLC achievement goals aligned to site school improvement plan
  - Essential Course Outcomes (ECO) written for Communication Arts, Mathematics, and all PLC team courses
    - Sample of feedback provided to teacher teams
  - Course pacing/mapping guides for PLC course
    - Sample of feedback provided to teacher teams

### **Site Visit Two – Mid-year**

- Review assessment data
  - Missouri Assessment Program (MAP)
  - PLC formative and summative assessment – elective area, Communication Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies
    - Disaggregated data by subgroup
    - Sample of student work and scoring guide
    - Assessment annotation
    - Depth of Knowledge, Grade Level Expectations, Essential Course Outcomes, Content and Process standards (CA #, 3.5, 1.20, 1.6, 2.2)

### **Site Visit Three**

- Site provide feedback to academic team on level of support
- Discuss next year's needs
- Walkthroughs

## **VII. Addenda**